

2011 Outdoor Alliance Partnership Summit Report



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2011, Outdoor Alliance convened about 150 people at the American Mountaineering Center in Golden, Colorado for the first Outdoor Alliance Partnership Summit. We designed the Summit to explore how partnerships between the Federal land management agencies and the human powered outdoor recreation community used recreation and stewardship to connect Americans to their public lands and waters in meaningful and sustainable ways. The Summit was inspired by President Obama's "America's Great Outdoors" initiative. Attendees included Federal land managers and policy officials, local and national leaders from the human powered outdoor world, and other key stakeholders.

At the Summit, attendees presented and explored 19 partnership success stories in a highly interactive format, while a team of six professional note takers captured the intellectual content generated. After the Summit, Outdoor Alliance studied the content and discerned four "Best Partnership Practices," as well as a few policy recommendations that, if applied, will increase the prevalence of effective partnerships across the nation. The Best Partnership Practices are:

1. Understand Partnerships as Systems
2. Give Partnerships the Care, Maintenance and Investments They Require
3. Cultivate Partnership Mindsets and Behaviors
4. Never Pass Up a Good Catalyst

A summary of each case study and a complete appendix of Summit materials and notes are included in this report.

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“Partnerships are not about doing more with less – they are about doing more with more partners”



THE ORIGINS OF THE SUMMIT

Public lands and waters are part of our history, culture, and national character. From continental mountain ranges to urban pocket parks, the fact that these places belong to everyone is essential to what they mean and how we experience and conserve them. Given all our shared interests, it is no surprise that some of the most thoughtful and effective management of our public lands and waters involves partnerships between stakeholders who have strong associations with these special places.

America's Great Outdoors Initiative (AGO), from its basic design to the public feedback generated during the listening sessions, is premised on partnerships to reconnect people to the outdoors. Whether improving recreational use and enjoyment of public lands and waters, or creating a new generation of stewards and mentors, AGO looks to partnerships between people, communities, organizations, businesses, and the federal government to achieve its goals. This approach certainly makes sense to all of us at the Outdoor Alliance—we believe that partnerships are the best way to purposefully connect effective management of the outdoors with meaningful outdoor experiences.

For decades, the human powered outdoor recreation community has successfully partnered with federal land managers at the local, regional and national level. These partnerships made tangible changes on the ground, whether building a well-designed trail, restoring a river, or protecting outdoor solitude. In addition to providing better, higher quality outdoor experiences, at their best these partnerships also restore landscapes and ecosystems, support local economies, reduce social conflict, and draw new populations to the outdoors, especially young people.

Given the central role of partnerships in land management and AGO, the Outdoor Alliance knew it could help advance AGO by identifying and studying some of the most successful, organic partnerships between the human powered recreation community and federal land managers. By developing a deeper understanding of how and why these partnerships worked, we could help inform the creation and application of policies and practices that might bring better partnerships to more places and, in turn, help further AGO's goal of reconnecting people to the outdoors.

With all of this in mind, we designed and produced the 2011 Outdoor Alliance Partnership Summit, which took place over three days in Golden, Colorado at the American Mountaineering Center.



WHAT HAPPENED AT THE SUMMIT

Originally, we hoped to gather at least 50 attendees, including policy and field staff from the federal land management agencies and leaders from the human powered outdoor recreation community, to study at least six partnership case studies. Rather than 50, we hosted almost 150 attendees from every region of the country. Nearly 50 people came from the major land management agencies, including all of their national recreation leads. The balance of attendees included local and national leaders from the human powered outdoor recreation community as well as people from the outdoor industry, hunting and angling, youth engagement, and traditional environmental worlds. In the end, we covered not six but 19 partnership case studies at the Summit.

Senator Mark Udall helped us kick-off the Summit with a video welcome, and the attendees hit the trail running thanks to keynote addresses from climbing icon and Black Diamond CEO, Peter Metcalf, and Interior Secretary Salazar's Counselor on AGO, Will Shafroth. The expertise, insight, passion and commitment all the attendees brought to bear during the Summit was inspiring.

Outdoor Alliance collected and synthesized all the content that was presented and generated at the Summit. With the help of the Meridian Institute and their team of six professional note-takers we captured all of the presentations, comments, and discussions regarding the nature and key elements of successful partnerships. The note-takers generated 100 pages of notes and prepared a succinct summary of Day One that attendees were able to review for the Day 2 sessions. After the Summit, we pored over all of these notes, presentation abstracts, and all other available materials in order to outline key findings and recommendations.

This document consolidates all the materials presented and distills them into usable information for both federal land managers and their private partners. The core of our findings from the Summit are four "Best Partnership Practices." Rather than a partnership checklist or how to guide, these Best Partnership Practices attempt to provide a deeper, more nuanced understanding of effective partnerships and how they work.

We hope those that read this report will be better equipped to build partnerships on their own terms. In addition to these Best Partnership Practices, we have a short list of recommendations that will help the Agencies and the human powered recreation community support partnerships. Also, included here are summaries that reflect the essential progression of events and key attributes for each of the 19 case studies we explored at the Summit.

Lastly, included is a complete appendix with an organized version of all the raw material generated at the Summit and items such as prepared remarks, the Summit agenda, The Meridian Institute's note summary and the attendee list.

BEST PARTNERSHIP PRACTICES

1. Understand Partnerships as Systems

Before the Summit, we thought about partnerships in terms of two participants—a partner from the human powered community and a federal land manager. Although binary partnerships certainly exist and can be very successful, we learned that networked partnerships with three, four, or more partners, tended to be sturdier and more productive relationship systems. Key additional partners in these networked partnerships include state or local business development organizations, friends groups, research institutions, traditional environmental groups, and organizations focused on serving youth. The Raystown Lake and North Cascade case studies illustrate this concept nicely.

One of the advantages of networked partnerships is that different partners in the system usually have different strengths, and therefore have comparative advantages relative to each other. As we learned in the Redding case study, federal partners often excel in planning, whereas the private partners often excel at implementation. Partnerships with multiple partners offer the opportunity to leverage each party's strength, be it technical design expertise, advocacy savvy, fundraising prowess or youth engagement techniques, towards the partnership goals.

When thinking about partnerships as systems, we must change the way we think about volunteers. Virtually every case study used the term “volunteer” and volunteers were sometimes identified as the heart and soul of a given partnership. However, volunteering may not be the best way to describe what is really going on in a partnership system. The case studies at the Summit demonstrated that people and organizations invested resources in their partnership not out of altruism or charity, but because each and every one of them wanted a return on their investment.

From a conventional perspective, volunteers provide value for free, essentially as a gift. In successful partnerships, volunteers are more accurately described as investors who expect a return on the value they provide.

Additionally, in the same way that different countries use different currencies, different partners look for different types of returns on their investments in the partnership. These currencies vary depending on their communities, organizational missions or statutory obligations. When a river is restored, the local community might put a premium on an uptick in economic activity, boaters may celebrate boatable flows, and a federal land manager might be relieved to finally increase habitat for a threatened or endangered species. Each one sees the partnership pay off in different currencies. The more interrelated these investment returns are, the stronger, more productive and longer lasting the partnership will be (and the greater likelihood that the partnership can lead to new projects).

The essence of understanding and treating partnerships as systems is that the different interests, motivations, investment returns (and types of currency) can fit together in a systematic relationship. Understanding partnerships as systems enables the partners to focus on what they do best in a coordinated manner and help give insight into how each partner defines success.

2. Give Partnerships the Care, Maintenance, and Investments They Require

The conventional justification for public-private partnerships is that partnerships enable an already overstretched federal government to “do more with less.” This justification is premised on the idea that federal land managers are resource deficient and the scarcity of money, staff, equipment and training necessitates partnering with private partners to somehow fill this resource gap. Unless the gap is filled, public lands and waters, as well as the experiences that they provide, are left to be less than they could or should be.

Throughout the Summit, however, the more-with-less justification for partnerships was essentially rejected. As one attendee explained, “Partnerships are not about doing more with less, but doing more with more partners.” The idea of partnerships “doing more” suggests that the true value of a partnership is its capacity to do work. Indeed, rather than a means to remedy a deficiency, it is more accurate to treat partnerships as powerful mechanisms that can harness the energy and resources of disparate players to a common end that none of the players could effectuate working alone. The Sandy Ridge and Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie case studies nicely illustrate this dynamic.

The capability to create new value (as opposed to merely remedying a deficiency) is not free. Indeed, one attendee observed, “Partnerships are not free and we should not treat them as though they are.” In the same way that physical machines require investments of time and money not only for acquisition, but also for proper care and maintenance, so do the most powerful and effective partnerships. In addition to financial investments and dedicated staffing, partnerships also require personal investments to build and maintain relationships between partners, and time investments to integrate new players into the partnership and to develop clear agreement as to the type of “work” the partnership is designed to do. The Friends of Pathways case study is a prime example of how caring for, investing in and maintaining a partnership can lead to robust, long-lasting outcomes that improve local landscapes and enhance local economies.

3. Cultivate Partnership Mindsets and Behaviors

At the Summit the attendees shared a wide variety of partnership techniques. A feature common to all of the successful partnerships was that they seemed to work most effectively when pursued under a distinct partnership mindset and behaviors. These mindsets and behaviors place interests over positions, diplomacy over conflict. The partnership mindset values the willingness to experiment and take risks, and key behaviors include a healthy dose of empathy, mutual respect, and simple goodwill.

From what we learned in the case studies, developing a partnership mindset and practicing partnership behaviors takes time. Diplomacy requires not only focusing on your needs in a given setting, but taking the time to study and truly understand the needs of other stakeholders in that setting. To the extent that stakeholders have a clear sense of their own interests as well as the interests of the other stakeholders, they have a good chance of evolving a stakeholder relationship into a partnership relationship.

Focusing on positions rather than interests is a trip down a rabbit hole that will eliminate the possibility of a successful partnership. The Colorado River case study illustrates how

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partnerships can flourish when the partners focus not on positions, but on their respective interests and how those interests can be harmonized.

The willingness to take risks, pursue experiments, and be comfortable in seeking forgiveness rather than permission are just as important to the partnership mindset as being diplomatic. Although some limited partnerships can occur without these traits, successful partnerships require an element of vision and purposeful design, neither of which can be secured without the willingness to experiment and the acceptance of risk. The Yosemite Facelift case study typifies this approach.

The management of federal lands and waters are, of course, subject to federal laws and regulations. These laws and regulations impose a great deal of responsibility, both professional and legal, on federal land managers. These same laws and regulations also create rights and protections for citizens and private entities.

What distinguished many of the case studies explored at the Summit was the brave willingness of both federal and private partners to understand and use laws and regulations as a platform that could support the work and vision of the partnership, rather than as a bunker to maintain the *status quo* and stubbornly protect their respective positions. Great partnerships are built when the parties say “Yes” before they say “No,” as the Snake River and King Range case studies illustrate.

Lastly, the partnership mindset requires goodwill. Our case studies revealed that earnestly conveying a willingness to go a little farther than what is personally or professionally required, coupled with a recognition and respect of everyone’s personal and professional limits, went a long way towards building trust and cooperation. Sharing food, drink, and time outdoors are proven ways to build goodwill into partnerships.

4. Never Pass Up a Good Catalyst

In our case studies catalysts for partnerships took many forms, from natural occurrences and scarcities, to personal relationships, and individual and community visions. All of these catalysts jump-started the process of building effective partnerships. A forest fire served as a catalyst to turn an existing partnership between the Forest Service and Colorado mountain bikers into a much more capable partnership at Buffalo Creek.

Personal relationships as catalysts factored heavily in many of the case studies, but especially so in the Mount Rainier case study, where it developed for years via email and telephone across two states and hundreds of miles. Partnership catalysts run the spectrum from the personal and local to the national level.

Indeed, whereas the SnowSchool case study was driven by the local recognition that kids in Boise had become disconnected from their abundant public lands (and that such disconnect was simply unacceptable), the partnership catalyst for the North Country Trail case study was actually an act of Congress. Although partnerships require structure and relationships to function, sometimes a singular or series of catalysts are responsible for truly bringing a partnership to life. Everyone involved in partnerships between federal land managers and the private sector should always be on the lookout for partnership catalysts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage Healthy Risk Taking and Give Everyone Space to Make Mistakes

Successful partnerships require some level of healthy risk taking by each of the partners. The proverb “nothing ventured, nothing gained” is as good a justification as any for partners to invest time, resources, and personnel in partnerships that are not guaranteed to result in a worthwhile return. In terms of dealing with the risk of making mistakes and disrupting group norms, we think the Navy Rear Admiral “Amazing” Grace Hopper says it best, “It’s easier to ask for forgiveness than it is to get permission.” We do not suggest that land managers and their partners actively seek opportunities to toe the line of what is allowed by federal statute and regulations. Rather, we recommend clear, unambiguous direction from agency leadership as to the value and necessity of experimenting with innovative partnership approaches at the field level. This direction must be accompanied with the express recognition that by putting a premium on innovation, some missteps are expected on the way to success.

2. Include the Utilization of Partnerships in Agency Goals and Performance Metrics

Given the demonstrated potential of partnerships and the Agency’s commitment to them, the degree to which land managers and agencies use partnerships could be made a regular part of measuring their effectiveness and accomplishments. Adding partnerships to job descriptions, where appropriate, should encourage healthy risk taking and keep everyone on the lookout for potential partnership opportunities.

3. Support Laws and Regulations that are Platforms for Partnerships

Laws and regulations ought to be the platform on which successful partnerships are built. Partnerships flourish when all parties feel they have a seat at the table and (sometimes) a legal stake in the project. While many aspects of partnerships are, and ought to remain informal, there are ways federal laws, regulations, and agency policies can better create the space for partnerships. A first step towards instituting more supportive laws, regulations, and policies should be a Partnership Audit, where all the agencies (with input from their current partners) assess their statutes, regulations, and policies to see which can be tuned up to better support partnerships. In pursuing this audit, it should be recognized that robust partnerships will actually enhance the administration of laws and regulations. Indeed, to the extent that an agency cultivates a network of partners, it simultaneously primes the pump for subsequent meaningful public engagement on formal agency activities, such as revising a forest or resource management plan.

4. Broadcast Success Stories

We learned that different partners measure the success of partnerships in different currencies. One of the currencies the Agencies trade in is public support and awareness of success stories. The human powered recreation community, and the Outdoor Alliance, must do more to broadcast examples of successful Agency partnerships. More awareness of these exemplary case studies will bring light to the good work the Agencies are doing, and will snowball, as more land managers and their potential partners realize the power of partnerships and become more willing to take the risk of initiating them. Success can build on success, but only if the means and ends of successes are broadcast far and wide.

Outdoor Alliance will publicize these Summit findings and success stories at the national, regional and local levels. We will also serve as a platform to feature a growing list of successes from across the nation.

5. The Human Powered Outdoor Recreation Community Must Continue to Organize

A key aspect of the human powered outdoor recreation community's ability to effectively partner with federal land management agencies is that it has a spectrum of organizational capabilities from the local to the national level. From the local leaders that know physical and social landscapes like the back of their hand, to major regional and national organizations that have a wealth of technical expertise and the ability to bring a broader policy perspective to bear, the human powered outdoor recreation community has the know-how to be effective partners with federal land managers. The better networked and more organized the community is, the greater our ability to share our expertise. Having built this organizational capacity and technical expertise, we will continue to develop consensus amongst the human powered community, in order to be better partners with federal land managers.

SUMMARIES OF THE 19 CASE STUDIES



The Rebirth of the Cheoah River

Robbinsville, NC

- Marisue Hilliard, Forest Supervisor, National Forests in North Carolina
- Kevin Colburn, National Stewardship Director, AW

Nine miles of the Cheoah River had been dewatered since 1928, leaving the native ecosystem, not to mention whitewater paddlers, high and dry. Federal relicensing provided the opportunity for AW and the Forest Service to work together to switch the river back on. After 7 years of negotiations, these partners, along with other interests, agreed on a flow regime that combined a steady amount of flow with periods of higher flow. While this new flow regime made only incremental changes, it made a huge difference for the ecosystem and for recreational opportunities. Rare and endangered species have returned, and thousands of boaters flock to the area, giving the local economy a much-needed boost. None of these multiple benefits would have been possible without the effort to demonstrate the economic value of recreation resources and, above all, the committed partnership between AW and Forest Service.



Paths to Recreation and Economic Success in Redding

Redding, CA

- Francis Berg, Assistant Field Manager, Redding Field Office
- Bill Kuntz, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Redding Field Office

Trail projects can reinvigorate a community, and cooperation among a wide range of partners is what makes these sorts of projects possible. Nowhere is this shown more clearly than Redding, CA. Over the last 5 years, the BLM partnered with a diverse group of organizations and agencies, including local foundations and municipal governments, to develop more than 125 miles of non-motorized trails. Thanks to a long term vision, a culture of cooperation and the agreeable disposition of everyone involved, these trails now provide an urban-wildlands link and high quality recreation for the local community, along with economic benefits and a quality of life that draws people and businesses to the area. This project demonstrates that while process is sometimes important, people are always important; in their words, "You need tolerable personalities. Baked goods help."



Winter-time Youth Engagement with SnowSchool

Boise, ID

- Edna Rey-Vizgirdas, Forest Botanist, Boise National Forest
- Kerry McClay, Director of Outdoor Recreation at Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation

Winter can be a tough time to get school kids outside, but a partnership between the Forest Service, and Winter Wildlands Alliance and Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation Area proves it can be possible. It all started with a pilot program at Bogus Basin on the Boise National Forest. From an initial season where 180 kids went on snowshoe and snow ecology trips, the program has grown immensely, adding more funding, staff and volunteers. Now the Bogus chapter of SnowSchool has introduced 6,300 students to winter outdoor recreation and the SnowSchool program has been replicated in 48 sites across the country. The success of the flagship site and the growth of the program since were only made possible by the commitment and enthusiasm of the land managers and their partners. They have worked together to make SnowSchool a success by growing the network of partners, opportunistically seeking funding from unexpected avenues, and sustaining volunteers for the long term.



Building the North Country National Scenic Trail

Lowell, MI

- Andrea Ketchmark, Director of Trail Development, North Country Trail Association
- Jeff McCuster, Manager of the North Country National Scenic Trail

4,600 miles, 7 states, 10 National Forests, and more than 150 different public lands; the North Country National Scenic Trail certainly has its challenges. And it is only half way completed. Since 1980, a Congressionally-designated partnership between the North Country Trail Association and the Park Service has worked to leverage volunteers and funds in order overcome these challenges and complete the trail. So far, the partnership has made great progress. This exceptionally long-term, multi-faceted and legislatively-supported project is only possible with the cooperation of the NCTA and the Park Service, along with 30 chapter groups and other affiliate partners.



Effective Personal Partnership on Mt. Rainier

Mt. Rainier, WA

- Allen Sanderson, Research Scientist at University of Utah
- Mike Gauthier, Chief of Staff, Yosemite National Park

Brought together by an unlikely catalyst, a land manager and a concerned climber formed a partnership that has led to significant improvements in Rainier National Park. While not involved in the incident, Mike Gauthier and Allen Sanderson were introduced to each other in the aftermath of a climbing accident on the mountain. This chance beginning sparked a conversation that ultimately led to the preservation and improvement of the historic Camp Muir. This partnership proved effective because each side could understand the other's position—Allen understood Mike was a climber who happened to be a land manager, and Mike could identify with the climber's perspective. Each knew the complexities the other faced in their jobs and while recreating on public lands. By capitalizing on a chance event, understanding each other's point of view, and spending time together (often over beers), these two were able to make positive change in the Park, proving the importance of getting to know potential partners before a project even begins.



Big Ideas Yield Big Rewards at Raystown Lake

Raystown, PA

- Dwight Beal, Raystown Lake Operations Manager, USACE
- Ryan Schutz, Rocky Mountain Field Director, IMBA

Raystown Lake had the potential to be a mountain bike destination, but it took a partnership between the Army Corps of Engineers and the Friends of Raystown Lake to turn this vision into a reality. With support from the Corps, the Friends of Raystown Lake, a volunteer organization founded just for this project, was able to raise funds and leverage volunteers to build the trails and other infrastructure around the lake. Together with other partners and with IMBA's technical assistance and national legitimacy, the agency and the local group built 30 miles of trails. From the \$800,000 initially invested, the project generated \$2 million of local economic stimulus, in the first year alone. Raystown Lake has now filled a gap in mountain bike opportunities in the mid-Atlantic, and serves as a model for agency partnerships.



Clean-up and Cooperation with the Yosemite Facelift *Yosemite, CA*

- Ken Yager, Yosemite Climbing Association
- Jesse McGahey, Climbing Ranger, Yosemite National Park

When the trash along the cliffs in Yosemite National Park got out of hand, climbers started the Yosemite Facelift project to do something about it. This grass-roots project would not have been able to overcome early challenges without persistent efforts to overcome administrative hurdles, as well as the trusting and respectful relationship climbers developed with the Park Service. Now, after 8 years, the Facelift attracts thousands of volunteers and over 80 other partners during the annual 5-day event. The effort now takes on large-scale restoration projects, along with the usual litter clean up work. The cooperation of the Park Service and the commitment of the climbing community have not only materially improved the Park, but also markedly improved relationships between all climbers and Park Service staff.



Long-term Improvement on the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie *Seattle, WA*

- Tom O'Keefe, Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director, AW
- Susan Rosebrough, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

The Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River is a whitewater paddling run and fly fishing spot a mere 45 minutes from downtown Seattle. Until 2005, the area around this stretch of river was blighted and the recreation resources were underdeveloped. All this changed when the Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program partnered with AW to enhance opportunities to enjoy the river. By leveraging both funds and volunteer hours, river access improved, community engagement increased, and property values along the river went up. This project and its benefits were made possible by the Park Service's willingness to partner with local stakeholders and the paddling community's willingness to invest their time for the long-term improvement of the area.



Jackson Hole Trails Partnership

Jackson, WY

- Linda Merigliano, Recreation Wilderness Trails Program Manager, Bridger-Teton National Forest
- Tim Young, Adventure Design

Over the last 20 years, the Jackson Hole community has partnered with the Forest Service to create a world-class, on and off pavement trail system. This exceptional partnership recently completed a 28-mile, \$1 million dollar singletrack and economic development project. This project not only connected more people to public lands and promoted a direct relationship with stewardship—it also generated \$18 million dollars of economic benefits for the community. The impressive return on the time, energy and money invested in this partnership indicates the huge potential benefits from long-term, committed cooperation.



Using Partnerships to Protect the Upper Colorado River

Glennwood Springs, CO

- Peter Fleming, Legal Council, Colorado River Water Conservancy District
- Rob Buirgy, Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholders Group
- Roy Smith, State Coordinator, Wild and Scenic Rivers Program, BLM
- Nathan Fey, Director, Colorado River Stewardship Program, AW

The iconic Upper Colorado River is not only a world-class recreation destination, it is also the largest source of supplemental water for Denver and the Front Range cities. With so many overlapping interests, a new management plan and Wild and Scenic review presented a challenge. The solution: a locally driven, collaborative stakeholder group that included a diverse array of agencies and organizations. After 4 years of negotiations, this group was able to work together and agree on a plan that protected all of their interests. For large projects like this, broad partnerships that work to break down silos between organizations and government agencies have proven to be the most effective way to balance recreation and other goals.



Youth Corps and the Sandy Ridge Trail System

Sandy, OR

- Zach Jarett, Lead Outdoor Recreation Planner, BLM
- Chris Bernhardt, Director of Consulting Services, IMBA

The innovative and internationally renown Sandy Ridge trail system bears witness to the success of the partnership between BLM and IMBA. These two partners, along with a network of others, not only built great mountain biking trails that meet some of the huge demand from Portland, they also engaged local, at risk youth. Thanks to committed and dynamic land managers and a trusting relationship with local youth corps groups, construction of the trails provided thousands of hours of employment and inspiration for thousands of young adults from the local area. Now a whole new generation of local youth have a connection with the land, and with mountain biking, that they never would have had otherwise.



Moving from Conflict to Cooperation in the North Cascades

North Cascades National Park, WA

- Roy Zipp, Environmental Protection Specialist, North Cascades National Park

When the development of a new sport climbing area in the North Cascades National Park caused resource concerns with the Park Service, a new partnership between AF and the Park Service allowed conflict to give way to cooperation. Both the climbers and the land managers worked on a compromise, where each side gave a little—and each side got a lot. The successful recognition of sport climbing made possible by this partnership paved the way for an even larger network of partners working to get local, gym-climbing kids outside through a national TeamWorks competition that encourages stewardship projects that instills a Leave No Trace ethic in youth, while also allowing them the opportunity to enjoy their local crags. This program laid the foundation for long-term relationships that not only fixed the original source of conflict but led to the additional benefit of introducing youth to the outdoors.



Effective Participation in Public Review on the White River National Forest

White River National Forest, CO

- Ben Dodge, Executive Director, 10th Mountain Hut Association
- Buck Sanchez, Deputy Forest Supervisor, White River National Forest

The Travel Management Plan revision process determines the management of entire National Forest road and trail systems. The successful 10-year TMP revision on the White River National Forest highlights the important roles for both the Forest Service and its partners. Fostering a effective, cooperative relationships during plan revisions like this require a healthy dose of patience and persistence, as well as empathy from both sides. With strong partnership mindsets, this planning process was able to incorporate more perspectives, create a more balanced plan, and increase the ease with which the plan was accepted.



Stakeholder Engagement on Denali

Denali National Park and Preserve, AK

- John Leonard, South District Ranger, Denali National Park and Preserve

A proposed increase to the Special Use Fee in Denali National Park put climbers and the Park Service at odds. But after a multi-year public engagement process, each side came to realize that both the agency and the climbers had the same interests in mind—the protection and enjoyment of public lands. This partnership overcame a contentious beginning to successfully institute a fee change that was acceptable to both parties.



Out of the Ashes at Buffalo Creek

Pine, CO

- Jason Bertolacchi, Marketing/Database Manager, IMBA
- Keith Clarke, Vice President, Colorado Mountain Bike Association
- Scott Dollus, Recreation Planner, South Platte Ranger District

In response to a fire, the local mountain bike community began volunteering by patrolling the burned area to assist the Forest Service. This small step precipitated a 15 year partnership with the Forest Service that ultimately lead to the creation of a mountain-bike specific trail system at Buffalo Creek. An unfortunate event, combined with a willingness to invest volunteer hours, sparked a long-term partnership that paid off for both the riding community and the land managers.



Cooperation in Indian Creek

Indian Creek, UT

- Mark Hesse, Rocky Mountain Field Institute
- Bob Leaver, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Monticello Field Office

Indian Creek presents a management challenge, with natural and cultural resources and world-renowned climbing spread over a mix public and private land. For 20 years, the Rocky Mountain Field Institute partnered with the BLM and AF to protect climbing access, educate the public, increase data collection, and improve the infrastructure for recreation. By acknowledging and leveraging the unique strength of every party in a broad network of partners, with the commitment of some core, sustaining members in the network, the RMFI and BLM were able to overcome the challenges, and maintain high quality recreation and a sustainable stewardship strategy for Indian Creek.



Finding Paradise Royal

King Range, CA

- Gary Pritchard-Peterson, Director of King Range National Conservation Area
- Tom Ward, IMBA
- Joey Klein Trail Specialist, IMBA

With a new wilderness bill closing several miles of trails to mountain bikers, the BLM and IMBA took the opportunity to propose trails in the adjacent King Range National Conservation Area. Thanks to trusting relationships amongst IMBA, BLM and a broad network of supporters and funders, this partnership was able to complete superior trails that demonstrate how mountain biking and conservation can go hand in hand. This partnership found fertile ground from the outset because the parties had sought out the type of people who can be the catalysis for partnership, and had invested in them before their roles in the project were definitively known. With this head start, the project took advantage of what could have been a negative situation to build a lasting partnership, as well as trails to protect both habitats and high quality recreation.



Creative Solutions: The Snake River Fund

Jackson, WY

- David Cernicek, Wild and Scenic River Manager, Bridger-Teton National Forest

After rising management costs necessitated an unpopular fee system on the Snake River, the Forest Service and the local community began looking for other options. Instead of the fee, they formed the Snake River Fund, a citizen group that partners directly with the agency. Over the course of this 14-year partnership, the Fund has provided \$1 million in direct benefits and identified innovative solutions to issues on the Snake. In this case, open-mindedness and trusting relationships lead to a creative solution to a common problem. This partnership project is sustained not only by the improvements on the ground, but the good credit the success of this projects adds to the land management agency.



Enhancing Public Access and Recreation in the Yampa River Basin

Steamboat Springs, CO

- Alan Gilbert, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the Interior, Southwest and Rocky Mountain
- Ken Brenner, President, Friends of the Yampa

The Yampa River in North West Colorado is an icon of the West. For decades, the Yampa River Legacy Project, a voluntary, collaborative, incentive-based project to protect and enhance the Yampa basin, has worked to increase public access and enjoyment and sustain the regions historical character and economy. Despite a very diverse group of local communities, from ranchers to Steamboat progressives, this partnership project has been able to find common ground and complete a number of successful initiatives. Great Outdoors Colorado provided much of the funding for the Project, and due to its initial successes and promising future, it was identified as a major focal point for AGO.

Given the unique phase of the Yampa River Legacy Project—enjoying some success already, but with great potential for the future—the Summit attendees used this case study as an exercise in applying the lessons learned from the previously explored case studies.



CONCLUSION

The Summit was a watershed event for the Outdoor Alliance and the broader human powered outdoor recreation community. We discovered that although partnership success stories might appear to be isolated works of passion or genius, they happen all across the country and share distinct common threads.

Following the Outdoor Alliance Best Partnership Practices will put federal land managers, the human powered outdoor recreation community and all of the other indispensable partners on better footing to make a go of their own partnership success stories now and into the future. The case studies we explored are really just a sampling of what has been happening for decades when Americans from different communities work together to take care of their outdoor places.

We believe there is great potential for many, many more partnerships to start, thrive, and succeed to the benefit of all Americans and America's Great Outdoors.

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